



Plenary sitting

B8-0600/2017

14.11.2017

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 135 of the Rules of Procedure

on terrorist attacks in Somalia
(2017/2962(RSP))

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on behalf of the ECR Group

**European Parliament resolution on terrorist attacks in Somalia
(2017/2962(RSP))**

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its previous resolutions on Somalia, notably 14 September 2016 and 6 October 2009;
- having regard to the statements by the Spokesperson of the European External Action Service on the attacks in Somalia of 27 November 2016, 25 January 2017, 19 and 27 February 2017, 9 and 20 June 2017, 31 July 2017, August 2017 and 10 and 30 October 2017;
- having regard to the Council conclusions on Somalia of 3 April 2017, 18 July 2016 and 15 February 2016,
- having regard to the statement by Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Federica Mogherini on the attack in Mogadishu, Somalia of 15 October 2017,
- having regard to UN Security Council resolutions 2372 (2017) adopted on 30 August 2017 and 2383 (2017) adopted on 7 November 2017,
- having regard to the UN Secretary-General's reports on Somalia to the UN Security Council of 9 January 2017, 9 May 2017 and 5 September 2017,
- having regard to the call of Somali president Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed in London on 11 May 2017, calling for the end of an international arms embargo on Somalia in order to acquire heavy weaponry with which to comprehensively defeat the Al-Shabaab insurgency;
- having regard to the African Union Mission in Somalia's (AMISOM) statement of 8 November 2017, announcing AMISOM's intention to initiate a phased withdrawal of troops from Somalia from December 2017, with the intention of a full withdrawal by 2020;
- having regard to the statement of 9 November 2017 by Brig. Richard Karemire, military and defense spokesman for Uganda, stating that the Ugandan military is ready to deploy up to 5,000 troops in Somalia outside the African Union/United Nations mandate;
- having regard to the Cotonou Partnership Agreement between the ACP and the EU,
- having regard to the mandate of the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights to promote and protect human and peoples' rights under the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights,

- having regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict;
 - having regard to the Organisation of African Unity Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism, adopted in 1999,
 - having regard to Rule 135 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Somalia's progress toward stable statehood remains a highly volatile affair, given that after over two decades of civil war, absence of state control and terrorism, the country remains in a state of flux politically and socially;
 - B. whereas in February 2017 Mohamed Abdullahi Mohamed, a dual US-Somali citizen, was elected President of Somalia in February 2017; whereas, despite ongoing security concerns and a chaotic and disrupted electoral process, the election nevertheless represented a relative improvement over the previous presidential election of 2012, in which just 135 Somali clan elders voted; whereas UN Special Representative to Somalia, Michael Keating, recognised that despite the numerous shortcomings of the election it represented a significant improvement over preceding efforts and may constitute a 'fresh start' for Somalia;
 - C. whereas the primary non-state armed group in Somalia is the terrorist organisation Al-Shabaab, which is noted to have pledged allegiance to Al-Qaeda in 2012; whereas Al-Shabaab has claimed responsibility since 2009 for numerous attacks in Mogadishu and throughout Somalia in densely populated areas;
 - D. whereas, whilst Al-Shabaab has suffered heavy losses from counterterrorism operations in recent years, UN reports indicate that the ISIS/Daesh faction in Somalia has grown significantly and may consist of as many as 200 armed fighters, with a possible influx of fighters from Yemen and Syria; whereas on 3 November media reports stated that the USA commenced counterterrorism operations, namely drone strikes, against Daesh targets in Somalia for the first time;
 - E. whereas although positive commitments and policy developments from the Somali Government continue to develop, insecurity and political infighting likewise persist in detracting from concrete progress on justice and security sector reform that would improve the capability of the Somali security services to prosecute threats to national security;
 - F. whereas the people of Somalia are suffering severely from the consequences of continuous attacks specifically targeting civilian areas by terrorist groups such as Al-Shabaab and Daesh; whereas one of the worst terrorist attacks worldwide in many years took place in Mogadishu on 14 October 2017, with a death toll currently estimated at 358, with approximately 400 wounded; whereas in 2017 car bombings, random shootings, targeted executions and abductions have taken place throughout Somalia, attributed to the terrorist actions of Al-Shabaab;
 - G. whereas AMISOM is mandated, *inter alia*, to reduce the threat posed by Al-Shabaab and other armed opposition groups, to provide security in order to enable the political process at all levels, as well as stabilisation efforts, reconciliation and peacebuilding in

Somalia, and to enable the gradual handing over of security responsibilities from AMISOM to the Somali security forces, which is contingent on the capabilities of the latter;

- H. whereas AMISOM's intended departure from Somalia comes following the statement of Somalia's information minister, Abdirahman Osman, claiming victory in Somalia's military war against Al-Shabaab militants, citing this as the primary reason for AMISOM's withdrawal; whereas in light of the spate of attacks throughout 2017, not least the horrific bombing of 14 October, it is not at all clear that Somali security forces are sufficiently capable to combat terrorism without external aid;
 - I. whereas Uganda's stated intention of reinforcing its armed presence in Somalia is a direct reversal of its previously statement announcing that it would withdraw more than 6 000 of its troops from Somalia by the end of 2017, and should be taken as recognition of the potential for the security situation within Somalia to deteriorate significantly;
 - J. whereas AMISOM forces have been accused on several occasions of severe human rights abuses, including indiscriminate killings and some cases of sexual exploitation and abuse; whereas the redeployment of foreign troops in Somali territory outside UN/AU mandates represents a significant cause for concern given previous allegations of human rights abuses committed by AMISOM forces;
 - K. whereas children continue to be killed, arbitrarily detained, and recruited into the armed forces, despite Somalia ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in January 2015 and endorsing the Safe Schools Declaration in November 2015, committing itself to taking concrete steps to protect students and educational institutions;
1. Expresses its deepest sympathy with the victims of recent terrorist attacks in Somalia and with their families, and deeply regrets the loss of lives; at the same time, strongly condemns the perpetrators of these attacks, attributed to the Al-Shabaab insurgent group;
 2. Recognises that, despite the ongoing civil war and severe strife afflicting Somalia politically and socially, the Somali government is taking steps toward a more unified and more democratic government and society; nevertheless, deeply regrets that existing measures were not enough to prevent the horrific attack in Mogadishu in October 2017;
 3. Calls for strengthening of the national security architecture and protection of the Somali population, as well as for additional support from the international community to AMISOM and the Government of Somalia in their work to build peace and stability;
 4. Recalls that an essential factor in achieving lasting stability and peace lies in upholding respect for the rule of law, democratic practices, free and fair elections and respect for common standards of human rights; recognises that despite severe threats to Somali citizens from terrorist, such fundamental rights must not be compromised;

5. Expresses the need for an all-inclusive dialogue between the country's social sectors, including the clans and tribes that compose the Somalian nation, to allow for mutual understanding and to establish a consensus for a long-lasting and stable peace; commends President Mohamed on respecting the country's tradition of power-sharing by appointing representatives from various Somalian clans to ministerial positions within the Government;
6. Welcomes the government and regional leaders' endorsement of a new National Security Policy, calling on the government to accelerate its implementation in view of the remaining threat posed by Al-Shabaab and potentially Daesh;
7. Calls on the EU and its international partners to remain strongly committed to cooperating with Somalia in building legitimate institutions and a Somali-owned security sector to combat terrorism and provide protection for the Somali population; stresses that this is key for Somalia's constructive development and the security of the wider region;
8. Calls on the African Union (AU) to ensure that all troop-contributing countries share information with the CCTARC (AMISOM Civilian Casualty Tracking, Analysis and Response Cell) regarding reports of or investigations into civilian casualties by troop-contributing countries, and that this information is also shared with the UN, as per UN Security Council resolution 2297, and fed into AMISOM operational plans;
9. Welcomes the AU's investigation into allegations of sexual violence by AMISOM troops, calls for full implementation of the recommendations of the report, and, in line with UN Security Council resolution 2272 (2016), urges the AU and troop-contributing countries to ensure that allegations are properly and thoroughly investigated and that those responsible are brought to justice;
10. Calls for better EU monitoring and capacity building to ensure accountability for abuses by AMISOM, especially given the fact that the EU is responsible for the bulk of its funding;
11. Highlights the encouraging progress made towards more inclusive elections and accountable government during the 2017 election; welcomes the decisions taken to increase women's representation in Parliament; stresses the utmost importance of a credible, inclusive, transparent and accountable electoral process ensuring the necessary legitimacy for the elected leadership;
12. Condemns the recruitment and use of children by security forces as soldiers and as informants, including the use of captured or deserting child soldiers; calls on the Somali Government to end this practice;
13. Calls for stronger measures to protect children affected by armed conflict and from recruitment and use by armed forces and groups; urges the authorities to treat children suspected of association with Al-Shabab primarily as victims and to consider the best interests of the child and international protection standards as guiding principles;
14. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign

Affairs and Security Policy, the African Union, the President, the Prime Minister and the Parliament of Somalia, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the United Nations Security Council, the United Nations Human Rights Council, and the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly.